

Many generations ago we were warned that each generation would be called upon to polish, sustain and improve this great republic. We were also told that these occasions could come disguised in many ways.

Tuesday's events have signaled to this generation, to those of us here, to those we represent, to every man, woman, child, individually and collectively, that our time, our test and our challenge, to maintain our republic's destiny to be the beacon of hope and freedom for the world is here and now, the wait is over, the question is answered.

My heart and my hand is offered, along with every other in this historic room as a supporter and a champion of this resolution. I am confident, Mr. Speaker, should I enjoy the technology to ask, right now, each and every resident of Idaho's First District the question of how I should vote on this measure, there would not be a dissenting vote.

Let's note for the record, Mr. Speaker, that we Americans chose neither the time nor the place for this, but that those soul-less terrorists who have made their choice known by these acts, have grossly underestimated the sterling resolve that historically visits this Nation during our time of need.

Mr. Speaker, we must now bury our fallen, and with heavy hearts, prayerful lips, but a firm belief that our lost are with our Creator and have joined in a celestial song to march us into the battle which we now willingly engage.

May the very God, whose existence these terrorist deny, grant them sufficient time on this earth to have these horrors visited on each and every one of them and anyone else who may have given them cause or quarter.

May this same God, smile on this vote we now offer, this nation we speak for and this purpose we undertake.

SIKHS ARE NOT MUSLIMS

HON. EDOLPHUS TOWNS

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, September 13, 2001

Mr. TOWNS. Mr. Speaker, in general I have been proud of America's response to the attack on our country that took place Tuesday. There have been no threats against the embassies of countries that might be involved. There have been no riots while the police have been concentrated in one particular area. However, there is one disturbing element. A number of Sikhs have been attacked by ignorant people seeking to vent their anger at what happened. In New York, an old Sikh man was beaten with baseball bats. A couple of young Sikhs were attacked Wednesday afternoon in Brooklyn. Sikh businesses have been stoned and cars have been burned. Apparently, these Sikhs were targeted because of their turbans and beards, which are required by their religion.

It would be grossly unfair to attack Muslims, even though Mr. bin Laden, who appears to be the prime suspect, claims to be an adherent of the Muslim faith. I know many Muslims and they are good people who are not involved in this kind of activity in any way. Yet

what makes these attacks even stranger is that Sikhs are not Muslims. They don't even wear a turban the same way. Sikhism is an independent religion. It is not part of Islam; it is not part of Hinduism. Sikhs are identified by five specific markers: uncut hair covered by a turban, a kirpan, or ceremonial sword, a bracelet, special underwear, and a special comb. These are distinct identifiers and are required by the Sikh religion.

I call on the media to report on the attacks on Sikhs and note the fact that they are not connected to the terrorist campaign in any way and have, in fact, condemned it. I urge the media to speak out against the attacks, and I urge President Bush to do the same. Let's not attack anyone for his or her religion or the way he or she looks. Those who do so are cut from the same cloth as Mr. bin Laden. In America, we do not accept that.

The Council of Khalistan, which is the organization representing Sikhs, has written a letter to the President and a press release strongly condemning the attack Tuesday. I would like to place them in the RECORD at this time for the information of my colleagues.

COUNCIL OF KHALISTAN CONDEMNS ATTACK ON UNITED STATES

URGES SIKHS TO GIVE BLOOD

WASHINGTON, D.C., SEPTEMBER 12, 2001.—Dr. Gurmit Singh Aulakh, President of the Council of Khalistan, today condemned the brutal attack on the United States that occurred yesterday.

"On behalf of the 21-million strong Sikh Nation and especially on behalf of more than 500,000 Sikh Americans, I would like to express our sadness and our sympathies to the people of the United States for the terrible attack on the United States yesterday and for the loss of life it entails," Dr. Aulakh said.

"I urge Sikh Americans to give blood and to pray for the victims, for their families, and for all those who are helping our country and our communities in this time of need," Dr. Aulakh said. "We must do our part as American citizens," he said. "We stand together as a nation."

"Like all Americans and all decent people everywhere, we condemn this brutal and senseless attack. The Sikh religion recognizes all the human race as one and we pray for the well-being of all. Our prayers and our sympathies are with the people of the United States at this tragic time. We especially pray for the families of those who have departed."

"This tragic event happened in the most diverse city in the world," Dr. Aulakh said. "There is hardly a national or ethnic group that has not been touched directly by this tragedy. Our sympathies are extended to those who have been touched personally," he said. "Violence against innocent people of any religion or ethnicity is unacceptable. It must be ended."

Unfortunately, some people have engaged in violence against Sikhs in the wake of the bombings yesterday. A couple of young Sikhs were attacked in Brooklyn. Sikh businesses have been stoned and cars have been burned. A Sikh boy was even shot in New York.

"Today we all stand together as Americans, regardless of race, religion, or ethnicity," he said. "We must not accept terrorism. We must unite against this evil," he said. "We must work to bring all Americans together to defeat this brutal enemy."

COUNCIL OF KHALISTAN,

Washington, DC, September 12, 2001.

Hon. GEORGE W. BUSH,
President of the United States, The White House, Washington, DC.

DEAR MR. PRESIDENT: On behalf of the 21-million strong Sikh Nation and especially on behalf of more than 500,000 Sikh Americans, I would like to express our sadness and our sympathies to the people of the United States for the terrible attack on the United States yesterday and for the loss of life it entails. This is a terrible tragedy and we know that you will take appropriate action. Like all Americans and all decent people everywhere, we condemn this brutal and senseless attack.

The Sikh religion recognizes all humanity as our brothers and we pray for the well-being of all. Our prayers and our sympathies are with the people of the United States at this tragic time. We especially pray for the families of those who have departed. May God bring peace to these departed souls and to their families.

We support you and we pray for the people of America. God bless you and God bless America.

Sincerely,

DR. GURMIT SINGH AULAKH,
President, Council of Khalistan.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. NORMAN D. DICKS

OF WASHINGTON

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, September 13, 2001

Mr. DICKS. Mr. Speaker, I was unable to vote on Roll Call number 338. I would have voted "yes" on this resolution condemning the terrorist attacks earlier this week.

COMMENDING RESCUE WORKERS AND VOLUNTEERS

HON. JOHN SHIMKUS

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, September 13, 2001

Mr. SHIMKUS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to commend the numerous rescue workers and volunteers around the country in their recovery efforts during this terrible tragedy. These brave and heroic citizens are working around the clock to bring calm and restore peace into our beloved nation. Again I wish to convey my thanks and prayers to these courageous rescue workers, their families, and everyone affected by this horrific chain of events; including Captain Jack Panches, Jr., whose mother resides in Ramsey in Fayette County. A retired Navy captain, he had worked in military intelligence and was at his desk at the Pentagon when the atrocious events of Tuesday occurred. He had a long and distinguished military career, holding command positions during the Persian Gulf War while logging more than 7,000 flight hours as a pilot of a P-3 submarine hunter aircraft. Captain Panches is survived by his wife Janice, his daughter Jennifer, and his son Jeremy.

I ask again, may God bless these rescue workers, may God bless the victims and their families, and may God bless our country.